

Amendments to the Specification

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 7, line 1, with the following rewritten paragraph:

a1 -- The present invention can further be provided with a ~~refill~~ renewal option for authorizing and/or verifying a ~~refill~~ renewal of a filled prescription stored on the host system. Thus, the ~~refill~~ renewal becomes a part of the prescription history for the patient, which is available to the health care provider which prescribes the medications and the pharmacies which fill the prescriptions so as to reduce the effects of fraud and abuse on the health care system. --

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 8, line 8, with the following rewritten paragraph:

a2 -- FIGS. 8a and 8b show a computer entry screen for prescription ~~refills~~ renewals of the prescription verification system depicted in FIG. 9. --

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 8, line 10, with the following rewritten paragraph:

a3 -- FIG. 9 shows the elements and the logic flow diagram, in more detail, of a ~~refill~~ renewal option of the host prescription process depicted in FIGS. 6 and 7.--

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 21, line 15, with the following rewritten paragraph:

94

-- The determination that the requesting system is a valid health care provider system 14 or pharmacy system 16 causes the process to branch to a host prescription process 162 as indicated by a line 160. The host prescription process 162 provides the health care provider system 14 or pharmacy system 16 a variety of options, including a generate report option 164, a new prescription option 166, a refill renewal option 167, a fill prescription option 168, a confirm prescription option 170, and an exit option 172 to exit the host system 12. Once the valid health care provider system 14 or pharmacy system 16 completes the host prescription process 162 the next step 174, along a line 176, is for the host system 12 to disconnect from the health care provider system 14 or the pharmacy system 16.--

•

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 23, line 17, with the following rewritten paragraph:

95

-- Referring now to FIG. 7, the host prescription process 162 is shown in more detail. The host prescription process 162 presents the health care provider system 14 (see FIG. 1) and the pharmacy system 16 with a step 200 for selecting a variety of options which may include generate report option 164, new prescription option 166, refill renewal option 167, fill prescription option 168, confirm prescription option 170, and exit option 172 for exiting the host system 12.--

•

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 30, line 5, with the following rewritten paragraph:

Al6 -- It should be appreciated that patients require ~~refills~~ renewals of prescription drugs after the patient has completely filled the prescription. To validate a ~~refill~~ renewal of prescription drugs, the health care provider at one of the health care provider systems 14 or a pharmacist at one of the pharmacy systems 16 selects the ~~refill~~ renewal option 167 shown in FIG. 6

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 30, line 15, with the following rewritten paragraph:

A17 -- The entry screen 300 includes a heading section 302, a patient information section 304, a practitioner information section 306, a prescription information section 308, an activity status section 310, and a prescription refill section or screen 312. --

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 33, line 17, with the following rewritten paragraph:

A8 -- When the status field 316 in the heading section 302 indicates that the prescription has not been entirely filled, only the information section 304, the practitioner information section 306, the prescription information section 308 and the activity status section 310 are displayed and quantities of the medication can be filled up to the total amount indicated in the total quantity field of the activity status section 310. However, where the status field 316 of the heading section 302 indicates that the prescription has been entirely filled, only then will the prescription ~~refill~~ renewal section 312 be visible to the

A8
Contd

pharmacist or health care providers utilizing the pharmacy system 16 or the health care provider systems 14. --

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 34, line 8, with the following rewritten paragraph:

A9

-- The prescription refill renewal section 312 preferably includes a date field 318, a refill quantity authorized field 320, a quantity filled field 322, an authorization code field 324, a first message field 326, and a second message field 328. The fields 318, 320, 322, 324, 326 and 328 will be described in more detail below. --

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 34, line 15, with the following rewritten paragraph:

A10

-- Referring now to Fig. 9 in combination with Fig. 8, shown therein is a logic flow diagram of the refill renewal option 167. Once the process branches to the refill renewal option 167, refill renewal request information and an authorization are received by the host system 12 for producing a "new" prescription based on a filled prescription stored on the host system 12. As will be discussed in more detail below, the refill renewal request information, and the authorization can be entered in by either the health care provider at the health care provider system 14, a pharmacist at one of the pharmacy system 16 or combinations thereof. --

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 35, line 5, with the following rewritten paragraph:

A11

-- Once the ~~refill~~ renewal option 167 has been initiated, search information is entered into the host system 12 so as to locate the particular filled prescription in the data base to be ~~refilled~~ renewed , as indicated by a block 340. The search information can be the unique prescription identification number contained in the prescription number field 314, or any of the various information in the patient information section 304, such as the patient's name or social security number, for example. --

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 35, line 15, with the following rewritten paragraph:

A12

-- The host system 12 then branches to a step 342 as indicated by a line 344. In the step 342, the host system 12 determines whether or not the ~~refill~~ renewal option 167 was initiated by a health care provider system 14 or a pharmacy system 16. If the host system 12 determines that the ~~refill~~ renewal option 167 was initiated by a pharmacy system 16, the host system 12 branches to a step 346 as indicated by a line 348. The host system 12 then determines whether the health care provider which is indicated in the practitioner information section 306 as issuing the filled prescription is a member of the prescription verification system 10. If the health care provider is a member of the prescription verification system 10, the host system 12 branches to a step 350 as indicated by a line 352. --

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 36, line 7, with the following rewritten paragraph:

A13

-- In the step 350, the host system 12 receives refill renewal request information from the pharmacy system 16. The refill renewal request information identifies a requested refill renewal of the filled prescription. The refill renewal request information may include the current date filled into the date field 318, and any desired message from the pharmacist to the health care provider in the first message field 326 (see Fig. 8). The refill renewal request information is then transmitted through the host system 12 to one of the health care provider systems 14 associated with the health care provider identified by the practitioner information section 306 of the filled prescription stored on the host system 12. In one preferred embodiment, the refill renewal request information is transmitted through the host system 12 to the health care provider system 14 so as to maintain the information contained in the refill renewal request information secure. --

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 37, line 1, with the following rewritten paragraph:

A14

-- The refill renewal option 167 then branches to a step 354 as indicated by a line 356 where the refill renewal request information is received by the health care provider system 14 associated with the health care provider designated for verification purposes. For example, in one preferred embodiment, the refill renewal request information is immediately delivered to a message box associated with the host system 12 for delivery to the health care provider designated for verification purposes. If the health care provider system 14 happens to be logged onto the prescription verification system, an indicator is immediately output by the health care provider system 14 to notify the health care provider

A14
Cont'd

that the ~~refill~~ renewal request information has arrived. If the health care provider system 14 is not logged onto the prescription verification system, then during log in of the health care provider system 14 to the host system 12, an indicator is displayed or otherwise output to the health care provider that a message has been received in their message box.

--

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 37, line 16, with the following rewritten paragraph:

A15

-- The health care provider reads the ~~refill~~ renewal request information and then authorizes the ~~refill~~ renewal at a step 358 (as indicated by a line 360) if the health care provider identifies the prescription ~~refill~~ renewal information as a valid ~~refill~~ renewal of a drug prescription to be ~~refilled~~ renewed for a patient of the health care provider. If the health care provider does not authorize the ~~refill~~ renewal, then the ~~refill~~ renewal option 167 ends. In one preferred embodiment, the health care provider provides authorization by filling in the refill quantity authorized field 320 of the prescription ~~refill~~ renewal section 312.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 38, line 5, with the following rewritten paragraph:

A16

-- The authorization may also include a message placed into the second message field 328, if desired, by the health care provider. The health care provider then transmits the authorization to the host system 12 in a step 362, as indicated by a line 364. The host system 12 immediately delivers the authorization to the pharmacy system 16 which initiated

the ~~refill~~ renewal request information. The authorization is then received by the pharmacy system 16, and a notification is provided to the pharmacist that the authorization has been received at a step 366 as indicated by a line 368. For example, the pharmacist may receive an audio or video message on the pharmacy system 16 indicating that there is a message from a member of the prescription verification system 10 which requires a response. The pharmacist then reads the information contained in the authorization and enters the quantity of the medication filled into the quantity filled field 322 of the prescription ~~refill~~ renewal section 312 and then clicks on the save button 332 to indicate that the ~~refill~~ renewal request has been completed. --

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 39, line 3, with the following rewritten paragraph:

-- The ~~refill~~ renewal option 167 then branches to a step 370, as indicated by a line 372, where the host system 12 generates a new, unique prescription identification number uniquely identifying the ~~refill~~ renewal of the filled prescription. In one embodiment, the new unique prescription identification number of the ~~refill~~ renewal consists of the unique prescription identification number of the filled prescription with a "R" suffix added. The ~~refill~~ renewal prescription is now considered by the host system 12 as a "new" prescription in the data base and partial fills etc. would be handled like any new prescription.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 39, line 11, with the following rewritten paragraph:

A18 -- It should be noted that once the new unique prescription identification number is generated, the data base record of the new unique prescription identification is auto populated with the appropriate information from the record identifying the filled prescription upon which the refill renewal prescription was based as indicated by a block 374. --

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 39, line 16, with the following rewritten paragraph:

A19 -- If the host system 12 determines at the step 346 that the health care provider designated for verification purposes is not a member of the prescription verification system 10, the refill renewal option 167 branches to a step 380, as indicated by a line 382. At the step 380, the pharmacist contacts the health care provider via telephone, facsimile, e-mail or the like, to obtain the health care provider's authorization via devices and/or method external to the host system 12. Assuming that the health care provider provides authorization for the refill renewal, the refill renewal option 167 branches to a step 384, as indicated by a line 386 where the pharmacist enters in refill renewal request information identifying a requested refill renewal of the filled prescription and a prescription refill renewal authorization obtained from the health care provider. For example, the pharmacist may enter the current date into the date field 318, an authorization approval into the authorization code field 324, a quantity into the refill quantity authorized fields 320 or quantity filled field 322, and any desired message into either one or both of the first and second message fields 326 and 328. The pharmacist then utilizes the pharmacy system 16 to click on the save button 332 whereby the refill renewal request information is

A19
Contd

transmitted from the pharmacy system 16 to the host system 12 and thereafter received and stored by the host system 12. --

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 40, line 16, with the following rewritten paragraph:

A20

-- The refill renewal option 167 then branches to the step 370 as indicated by a line 386. The step 370 was described hereinbefore with reference to Fig. 9 and will not be redescribed herein for purposes of clarity.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 41, line 1, with the following rewritten paragraph:

A21

-- If at the step 342, it is determined that a health care provider system initiated the refill renewal option 167, the process branches to a step 390, as indicated by a line 392. At the step 390, the prescription refill renewal screen 312 is provided by the host system 12 to the health care provider system 14 associated with the health care provider. The health care provider then enters refill renewal request information in to the health care provider system 14. The refill renewal request information is transmitted from the health care provider system 14 and received by the host system 12. The refill renewal request information identifies a requested refill renewal of the filled prescription, and a prescription refill renewal authorization. For example, the health care provider can enter the following refill renewal request information into the prescription refill renewal screen 312: a date into the date field 318, a refill quantity in the refill quantity authorized field 320, and any message in the first message field 326. The health care provider then clicks on the send

A21
button 330 and the refill renewal information is delivered, through the host system 12, to the pharmacy system 16 associated with the pharmacist who originally filled the prescription. --

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 41, line 18, with the following rewritten paragraph:

A22
-- The pharmacy system 16 then receives the refill renewal request information, as indicated by a block 394. If the pharmacy system 16 happens to be logged onto the prescription verification system 10, an indicator is immediately output by the pharmacy system 16 to notify the pharmacist that the refill renewal request information has arrived. If the pharmacist system 16 is not logged onto the prescription verification system 10, then during log in of the pharmacist system 16 to the host system 12, an indicator is displayed or otherwise output to the pharmacist that a message has been received in their message box. The pharmacist will then partially or completely fill the refill renewal prescription and enter in a quantity filled of the medication into the quantity filled field 322. The pharmacist then click on the save button 332 and the process branches to the step 370 as indicated by a line 400 wherein a verification of the requested refill renewal is generated by the host system 12 including a unique prescription identification code identifying the requested refill renewal whereby a pharmacist associated with a pharmacy system is authorized to provide the refill renewal of the filled prescription to the patient.--

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listing, of claims in the application: